ABOUT THE COVER

Le lion couchant or crouching lion better fits its name when viewed from the east, but here from Huntington. Samuel Hatfield has captured in its winter grandeur the peak that perhaps is the special favorite of most Vermonters. It is the fourth highest in the state—4083 feet.

The crouching (not crouching) lion probably was sighted by Champlain more than 300 years ago and named by him or other early French explorers. The Indians called it Tah wach beke e radio (the saddle mountain), a name not much pleasanter to the ear than camel's hump, which, regretfully, it is called today by most. William Dean Howells referred to it as "The Lion's Head" and sometimes the less poetically inspired termed it "Camel's Lump."

Mr. Hatfield discovered this particular vantage point while on a Green Mountain Club hike. He came back and photographed it last winter with a 4 x 5 view camera with 28 inch lens, stopped to f/64, two sec. exposure on Ektachrome. The farm in the foreground was a half mile away.

The bare granite summit of le lion couchant may be reached by easy hiking trails.

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Green Mountain POSTBOY

By WALTER HARD

outdoor winter sports too late for safe skiing, will find real joy in setting forth on snow shoes. He may get tangled with himself a few times, and will doubtless find he has muscles where he never knew they existed before, but he will soon get the swing of it and that without endangering his general physical structure. Parenthetically we might add that one may wear the same clothes for both modes of travel except there is need to have a pliable kind of footgear for snow shoeing instead of the stiff ski boot. So one may look fully as picturesque as he would if he were about to execute the most elaborate of turns on a slope of Marsfield or Big Bromley.

SPECIAL PRIVATE EQUIPMENT.

While just as many as can, find pleasure on the many and varied ski slopes, the Post Boy would add to the numbers of enthusiasts those who feel the need to get away from their fellow man for a short time. At times the herd instinct seems to be dominating the whole race. We find so many who are bored to death once they got caught out somewhere with just themselves for companions. They are really scared to be alone. They blindly follow the crowd without ever thinking where they are going. Like the woman who used to tear into the country store and drive the owner wild tearing around from this thing to that. As she was departing with her arms full one day, the worn storekeeper sank down on the bench beside a sitter. "My lord" he said wiping his brow, "if that woman should ever stop to think she'd lose her balance and keel over back'ards."

COME ON IN.

So if you, kind friend, feel the need for giving your soul a chance to catch up with your body, perhaps alone or with the one who shares with you without need for words, equipped in foot and mind as suggested, fare forth on that long stretch of meadow there, white and glistening, with lines and ridges here and there marking hidden walls and fences. You'll find yourself walking over these buried barriers with a feeling of mastery. The smooth whiteness offers an inviting canvas on which to imprint the pattern of your webbed shoes or the double line of your skis. And as you go into the encircling woods, where the snow is already patterned with the interlacing shadows of tall trees and slender bushes, you will find your steps slowed and your senses alerted by the very absence of sound. Then you'll hear the nearby homey voices of the winter birds, curious about the visitor to their domain. The raucous cry of a startled blue jay may break in only to make the following silence deeper. As you move on, ahead there may be a sudden whirlwind of snow marking the hasty departure of a rabbit you are not quick enough to see, or your hair may rise as from under your feet a partridge slants off, disturbed in his snow house where he has spent the cold night. From another part of the woods you may hear the crescendo of a saw as it cuts through a log in some temporary lumber job, or from away off down the valley you may hear now and then the whistle of a far off train, just to remind you. You look up. Through the tree tops there is the blue of the winter sky—a blue seen only through the lens of cold clean air. And always, surrounding one as a garment, there is the white glistening stillness; balm for the soul, freed for a little time from the world of man-made things and the too-busy makers.

When you return to foregather with the young sprouts who, in the meantime, have been flying through the air with the greatest of ease, you will find yourself young again in spirit and withal, whole in body. And soon—pleasant dreams! END
BOOKWAGONS in VERMONT
by Dorothy Randolph

Vermont tradition in good reading and education is helped today even to mountain villages by these traveling libraries.

"...And did those dogs ever go for old Slewfoot?" John Grew asked Doris Bates, his regional librarian from Brattleboro, in giving her his opinion of "The Yearling." Advanced in reading for his years, he had not missed any of the glory of this fascinating tale. As he talked on, Doris thought over what book she might have with her for his next adventure. When he had finished his review, she said: "And, what would you like this time, another story of animals, or —" Promptly his answer came, "'Winnie the Pooh' for my kid sister, and..." His request was for a book of poems.

The children at the Rabbit Hollow School have been served, holes on the shelves refilled, and the bookwagon must be on its way, for there are eight more schools to be visited before the day is over.

This incident is part of a familiar pattern to the five regional librarians who take their bookwagons, actually small trucks designed to carry 600 books, into practically every corner of the state, visiting schools and libraries, to the joy of pupils, teachers, and librarians. Six hundred and eighty-nine rural one and two-room schools with little or no local library facilities are served directly by the bookwagons provided by the State Free Public Library Commission. At each school having from six to fifty pupils, including all eight grades, each pupil chooses books which may be of interest to him. The librarian helps, but Vermont children know what they like. Often on a sub-zero day a child will hunt stubbornly for just the right title while librarian and child gradually freeze. But the child's joy at finding "just what I wanted" is worth the "freeze." Until the bookwagon comes again, teachers often say that every book has been read by or to every child in the school. No wonder the bookwagon is a welcome sight, its welcome further assured by such principals as James O'Rourke of Middletown Springs, who told Elizabeth Ball, Rutland Regional Librarian, that the bookwagon was equal to having an extra teacher.

Riding back into the hills on a clear, cold day with snow piled higher than the bookwagon in the one-lane plowed road to the schoolhouse is like traveling to the never-never land. One can only hope it is right and that it will not end in being stuck in a snowbank. But, as Mary Stewart, St. Johnsbury Regional Librarian, always says, "We are never stuck until we can't work our way out." For instance, there was one day when her..."
bookwagon was stalled not once but four times. A team of horses pulled it out the first time, oxen the second; by pushing and digging it was pried out the third, and, a plough coming from the other direction gave the fourth pull. Then, after following the plough for some distance, the librarian and her driver arrived at the school only to find it closed. The children could not get through unploughed roads. So, again with the help of the plough and its driver, Mary crawled in a window, collected such books as she could find, and, following a scribbled list found on the teacher's desk, she left a new collection including requests for: a book about birds, how to build boats, "The Eskimo Twins," some fairy tales and a book of plays for the lower grades. And, they were on their way—all in the day's work for the bookwagon!

But, it isn't always winter. After the snowdrifts, we who maintain this service, must live through mud season, the best part of this period being sugar-time with invitations to stop at the sugar-house or to sample a new sugar cake at a farm home. Syrup in the spring—each year it tastes better than ever! And then comes summer, and we are glad our work is mainly on the back roads of Vermont.
Tired as we may be from a long, busy day, we cannot but enjoy the beauty of the green hills and the gay flowers of the meadow, and envy the leisurely cows—reminding ourselves that some day we must teach a cow to read. And there is the usual but always surprising borrower who stops the bookwagon along the way wanting something of its wares. Such was the farmer who hailed the St. Albans bookwagon from the field for something on potatoes, or, another driving his horses home from the day’s work who wanted a copy of Foxe’s “Book of Martyrs.” He was having an argument with a college professor who had bought the farm next to his. Curiosity bubbled, but no questions were asked. Not having the book on the shelves, it was mailed out the next morning. Several weeks later, when the first fall visit to local schools was being made, a small boy at one handed the book to Ruth Paquette, the Regional Librarian, with—“Here’s your book. Pop won.”

The service is just that informal and friendly. Anyone may use it through a local library, if nearby, if not, by mail or through some other convenient source. In one hundred and three villages and hamlets, Library Stations have been set up—in a store, a post office, a farm home, wherever it might be convenient for neighboring families to come and someone is willing to be responsible for the books. Here, too, regular visits are made the year round and many of these stations are as active as a library. Available at any hour, neighbors may stop in to sit and read or to take a book home. At one, Miss Ella Bromley delivers books on her bicycle for a radius of several miles to shut-ins or others too busy to get to her house. At another the bookwagon was greeted by a row of small boys, perched on a fence rail, fishing rods in hand, even delaying going fishing until they had chosen something from the bookwagon.

Bookwagons are not new to Vermont. The first one took to the road thirty years ago, the gift of the Vermont Federation of Women’s Clubs to the State Library Commission. The idea itself came from Miss Mary R. Titcomb, first Secretary of the commission. Resigning her secretarialship in 1905, Miss Titcomb left Vermont to go to Maryland to try out her idea of a county library and a “Bookwagon,” so-called because this first public library on wheels in the United States was a springwagon drawn by two shining black horses. Driven by Josh Billings, a former “butter monkey” and Civil War veteran, this very regal appearing vehicle was a great source of curiosity but quickly accepted when its mission was understood.

In Vermont, the original bookwagon, while not drawn by horses, was a Black Maria sort of truck whose wooden sides opened to shelves of bright colored books to be borrowed, FREE. Named the “Alice Coolidge Bookwagon” after Mrs. Omeron H. Coolidge of Rutland, first president of the Vermont Federation of Women’s Clubs, and close friend of Miss Titcomb, Vermont’s bookwagon caused its share of curiosity and skepticism but was soon accepted by the libraries which it then served. And, as quickly and naturally the libraries have welcomed the extended services of the bookwagons which the Regional Library program has been able to offer them. Now, regular visits every two months during the year are made to each library. No matter how large or how small the local collection there is always a need for more books—for special interests of readers or just for the everyday use of borrowers who want contact with the outside world, travel to far places, acquaintance with the great, glimpses of the past, hopes for the future. The bookwagons do their best to meet these needs for recreation and study. Libraries borrow from fifty to two hundred books on each visit and often write to the regional office for special help for students or others wanting particular information.

But how did all this Regional Library service come about? In 1934, when the depression had taken its toll, Vermont libraries like others over the country, had had their financial support reduced to an
irreducible minimum. Deeply concerned over their fate, their librarians turned to sympathetic lay people, and, convincing them of the plight of Vermont libraries, urged them to lend a hand. These lay friends banded themselves into what they called The Vermont Better Library Movement with Dr. Arthur Wallace Peach as president. Divided into small committees they set to work to investigate all phases of Vermont library service, and, after exhaustive study, brought out some amazing facts.

In spite of 227 libraries in the 246 towns of the state, there were still 51 towns without a public library. Of the 227 libraries, fifty percent were open only two to four hours each week, some of these not at all during winter months, and an equal number received less than $100 annual support. Vermont, whose first library was organized in 1791 (Brookfield), whose people are book-loving and education-minded presented a sorry picture. Using the motto, “Adequate library service for every Vermonter”—the Better Library Movement now joined the librarians whole-heartedly to make plans for giving greater support to local libraries and some form of service to the unserved areas. Plans were made and re-made, services elsewhere were studied and experts talked to. Finally, on the eve of the opening of the 1937 legislative session a very nebulous plan of regional library service based on the existing bookwagon idea was agreed upon. A few days later a brief, all inclusive, bill, was introduced into the Senate. After going through the usual pains of any legislative action, this bill passed both houses with only one dissenting vote. An appropriation was made and Vermont’s new service became a reality. Vermont had the first state-wide regional library service under the direction of a state library agency.

This service now consists of a central headquarters and five branch, or regional, offices. Headquarters and one regional office are located at the State Library building in Montpelier, the other four are in the city libraries of St. Johnsbury, St. Albans, Rutland and Brattleboro whose librarians and trustees so generously offered space for their use. A total of 90,000 books is divided among these offices and is distributed to nearly 1800 places over the state on a planned routine. Each place is visited every six to eight weeks throughout the year with a regular exchange of books, thus making every book do the work of several. Friends on every side have had their share in making the work successful. The State Federation of Women's Clubs and its continuing gift of a bookwagon to replace one worn out, the Home Demonstration Groups of the state, gathering a dime a year from each member to supply another bookwagon; other groups and individuals sending gifts of money for books; and the words of good will, a hurried thank you, a welcoming smile—each has played its special part.

Although the books cannot be followed from the time they leave the bookwagons until they return, spot checks have been made showing that each book is read from five to twenty-five times. The title reporting the largest circulation is "Let Me Show you Vermont," by Charles E. Crane, which was read by sixty-eight people in the few months it spent at one small library. According to the Regional Librarians their readers have more interest in the older books, not because they do not know about new titles, for reviews are read in papers and magazines, but they are wary and inclined rather to wait until a book has proved itself before rushing to get it. Proof enough that Vermonters like to read is the fact that during the past year, at a cost of only 18c per capita, the 90,000 books in the Commission collection have run up a circulation of over one million borrowings. On such a record it is hardly possible there could be anyone in the state who does not know and borrow from these "Roving Libraries."
The young vet worked feverishly over the weak Jersey, getting out needles, tubes and a bottle of calcium-dextrose to administer an injection. "John, why didn't you call me earlier? We could have saved both the cow and her calf."

The farmer shook his head. "Don't know, Doc. Thought she might be all right by herself. If she ain't gonna pull through we can slaughter her."

"No we won't. We'll save her." The vet was very angry. "Won't you people ever learn that you don't have to kill a cow just because she's sick?"

He turned to me, a look of desperation in his eyes. "When you write your story tell them this. Sick animals don't have to be killed like in the old days; modern practices and drugs and operations can save them. That's hard for some of the old timers to understand. Tell them that vets are doctors, not miracle men, and to call us in time. We can't bring the dead back to life." He pointed at the still-born calf he had just delivered. "This wouldn't have happened if I'd been called a couple of hours ago."

It was then only 7:30 in the morning. The scene was a barn some twenty miles from the vet's office. This was the first call of a routine day that was to keep the country vet, Raymond Dumas of Waterbury, careening over icy roads from 6:30 until after 11:00 that night. On this day the "Doc" made 21 calls and drove 105 miles.
The Doc is a young man as country vets go, just 29. He has had only three years of actual practice, but back of that are nine long years of medical training, culminating in a year's study and work at the famed Angell Memorial animal hospital in Boston. To the more stubborn old-time farmers he is still a young squirt armed only with "book learnin'"; yet in fact he is a young man of science, incredibly well schooled for a veterinarian, and filled with such a terrific drive for his calling that in his three short years of practice he has acquired practical knowledge that might take a less ambitious man twice that time to gather.

A veterinarian must possess not only a love and understanding of all animals, but also sufficient energy and stamina to keep going up to 18 hours a day, every day of the year for years on end. Dumas apparently has had these qualities always. Youngest child of a family of eight—the runt of the litter, he calls himself—he had to start early to defend his rights with his brothers and sisters on the family farm in Southbridge, Mass. As a child he was fond of the farm animals, and often took on more than his share of the chores in order to be with them. The scientific side of his nature asserted itself early, and he soon had a fine collection of stuffed wild animals of all kinds. He taught himself taxidermy, and got his license to practise professionally at the age of thirteen. In addition to increasing his own collection—which is now very valuable—he earned his spending money through taxidermy and by the time he was ready for college he had saved enough to pay his way through the first year. A succession of part time jobs got him through college, and as many of these jobs as he could manage were connected with his profession. He made detailed cut-away medical models and once even a pliable cow which could be disassembled in order that students could practice deliveries. He assisted in the laboratories too, and it was here that he met and married his wife, Jo Ann, in his third year. Jo was studying to be a laboratory technician, and has her B.S. degree in medical technology. When Dumas operates she serves as a highly trained and invaluable assistant.

After his schooling was complete, he worked with another and established vet in the midwest for five months. He wasn't entirely satisfied with this job, and when he heard that Vermont needed another vet, he put in for the position. Through pure initiative he nosed out a half dozen other applicants. This was in 1949, and housing in was in short supply then around Waterbury. While he was house hunting he slept in his car, haunted real estate and newspaper offices. This perseverance paid off, and he soon had both a place to live and the job while the others were still house hunting.

The pioneer in him chose Vermont as a place to launch his career. His dream was, and is, to put to use some of his unique training in the far reaches of the back hills and valleys where it will do the most good. Dumas, here only two years, finds Vermonters, especially the older ones, reserved, proud, stubborn. While he thinks these admirable traits, they make it hard for the young vet to show what modern medicine can do. Yet he is succeeding, and day by day his practice grows as he is called upon more and more. He is bringing a new vision into the hills, and in so doing, he is becoming, in his own driving way, a Vermonter.

The day I rode with the Doc was bitterly cold, and started long before daylight. At 5:30 his wife Jo was up, and by 6:30 had the boarding dogs and cats fed, their 9 month old girl up and fed, and the Doc's breakfast ready for him. At 6:45 the phone rang, and we were off on the first emergency call, the delivery of the still-born Jersey.

By the time he had finished there it was 7:40. The farmer's wife hurried from the house to say that Jo had phoned: sick cow in Waitsfield, some fifteen miles the other...
ABOVE: Early morning finds Dr. Dumas at the barn of John Farr in Waterbury administering as gently as a man can an injection of calcium-dextrose to a cow with milk fever.

side of Waterbury. An emergency and to come quick. Thirty-five minutes later we had covered the thirty-five miles, and the Doc hurried into the round hilltop barn. Quickly he walked down the row of cows, in some mysterious way picked out the sick one, sniffed her breath, looked at her eyeballs. By the time the farmer came in he had taken her temperature, listened to her breathing with a stethoscope, and was preparing to administer a jugular injection and penicillin for pneumonia.

"She'll be OK," the Doc said to the farmer. "I'll leave these pills with you—one every hour—and you call me tomorrow and let me know how she is. By the way, how do you bring your feed in here?"

The farmer pointed across the barn, opposite the sick cow. "Through that door. But I only leave it open a few minutes."

"Better rig up some way to stop that draft when it's open, or you'll have more sick cows."

"OK, Doc," the farmer said slowly. "It's been just that way a long time now, but I've seen enough of you now so's I figure you must be right. I'll fix it. Oh, and by the way Doc," his voice changed to a tone that all doctors have heard many, many times, "long as you're here, I wonder if you'd look at another cow that's been a-lin' a little?"

Fifteen minutes and three cows later we were on our way again. There were no emergency calls at the moment, so we drove over to nearby Moretown to fill in the time with vaccinating calves and testing herds for tuberculosis. This work is sponsored by the State of Vermont, and has done much to improve the standards and health of Vermont herds. Dumas covers an area of about 900 square miles, which includes about 2000 cows, and this work neatly fills in any spare time that he might have.

At 8:50 we pulled into the first farm. There was no one around, so the Doc walked into the barn, looked the herd over and opened his kit. There were five calves to be vaccinated, tattooed and given a numbered ear tag. I wrestled with and held the calves while the Doc vaccinated, tattooed and tagged rapidly and efficiently. At 8:57 he was through. How he holds those calves when he is alone I can't imagine; I had my hands full without trying to do anything else.

We arrived at the next farm at 9:03. Here he vaccinated seven calves and gave the shots for the TB test to the entire herd of 23 cows and one bull. At 9:21 he was finished, and left a copy of his report on the barn door for the farmer, with a note that he would be back in three days to read the results of the tests.

By 11:40 he had made eight more stops, vaccinating and testing, and we had worked our way up the road pretty well back towards Waterbury.

"We're lucky today," he said. "Not very often I'm near home at lunch time. We'll stop by and pick up the mail and then run home." As he emerged from the post office with the day's mail—a solitary bill—he was stopped by an elderly man for advice on his dog that was doing poorly. Five minutes later he was the center of a group of six men—all getting advice. For one of them he opened the back of his jeep and got a bottle of medicine. At 12:03 the group dwindled and we drove home.

Jo, having seen us drive by, had lunch on the table—huge steaming plates of venison stew. As the Doc ate she gave him a resume of the calls that had come in. Two dogs had arrived to be boarded, one sick cat. Several phone calls, either for advice or to make appointments for treatment. As we ate, the grain truck arrived and left off 100 pounds of dog food. The phone rang five times in ten minutes, and each time the Doc left his lunch to answer it, answering questions, giving advice or arranging appointments. The care and courtesy with which he answered each call denied the furious pace at which the day was progressing. As he ate his pie, an old man with an old dog wrapped in sweaters came in. There was little the Doc could do for this dog, and the old man knew it. The dog was about dead and he wanted it put to sleep, but he couldn't bring himself to suggest this, and left it for the Doc to mention. Gently and tactfully, for the man and the dog were obviously old friends, the Doc did so, and
finally the old man said good-by to his dog and left.

There were several calls to make in the afternoon, none of them pressing emergencies. As the Doc put on his battered hat and headed for the door, Jo came running from the kitchen.

"Ray, you haven’t forgotten Mrs. Simmons’ cat? She’s coming at five."

"At five? Well, get him ready, will you, Jo?"

Off came the hat and on went the white operating gown. Jo slipped the cat into a restraining bag, getting clawed twice in doing so, and administered the ether. Somehow she also had the Doc’s instruments sterilized and ready, and the right ones in her hand as he called for them. In eight minutes the young tom cat was no longer a tom, was back in his box, and the Doc had his hat on again and was out the door.

The afternoon went much the same as the morning. A stop to treat a cow with hoof rot, an emergency call for acute mastitis, four stops for vaccinations and TB testing, two sterility shots, a look at
ABOVE: Almost midnight, with the electric wires down from the heavy storm, finds Demas nodding over the latest medical journals.

a cow with hardware lodged in her stomach. Here the Doc left pills, told the farmer to elevate the cow's front, and call him tomorrow. Perhaps operating would be necessary, but he hoped not.

By six o'clock it was dark. The Doc looked tired, and we headed for home again. An hour of comparative quiet followed—only five phone calls—and the Doc ate and played with his little daughter.

At seven he remembered a breeders' meeting in Middlesex, and rushed out. He couldn't stay for all of it, because of the evening's work ahead, and by 8:10 he was back. Meanwhile Jo had put the baby to bed, washed the dishes and gotten the operating room ready. But, knowing the Doc was usually home in the evening, the townspeople had started bringing in their pets for treatment. By 9:30 he had examined and treated five dogs, three cats, set and splinted a Cocker's leg.

When the office was finally quiet, he once again donned his white surgeon's gown. Seemingly as alert and sure as he had been 18 hours before, and with his wife assisting quietly and efficiently, two bitches were spayed in the next 43 minutes. The old dog in the sweaters he had left to the last. Gently he put the dog
on the table, talking softly to him all the time. As he put the hypodermic in the dog's leg the animal lifted its old head and looked at him. The Doc turned his head away, visibly affected, and slowly pushed the plunger. The dog went to sleep quietly and painlessly.

At a quarter to eleven we sat in the kitchen over a final cup of coffee. It was snowing hard outside, and the lights were flickering badly. The Doc had several medical journals in front of him, and Jo the new Sears Roebuck catalogue.

"This spring we're going to start building our new boarding kennel," he said. "We have a lot more small animal work in the Summer time." And he told about their plans to erect a kennel with large dog runs. These would become a part of a small animal hospital which they have planned to build here later. "It's hard getting started. But someday we'll have the finest small animal hospital in this part of the country. And then I had an idea for a sort of a natural history museum, too. The collection I already have will make a pretty good start, and there's nothing like that around here. The kids would get a lot out of it. But it goes slowly," he said again, little realizing how fast he has gone so far, "and some people don't always realize how much things cost and why I need to be paid right away. Why, our drug bill alone runs over $600 in the winter months."

"And the house," Jo put in, "that's going to be all fixed up. That wall comes out, pine panelling in there, picture window over here. Of course, that will be after everything else is done," she added.

We talked on for a while and the lights began to flicker again. Finally, as if to climax the tired vet's day, they went out. Unperturbed and as a matter of course Jo found candles. At 11:30 she excused herself and went to bed. Thoroughly exhausted myself, I said goodnight to the Doc and left him nodding over his journals.

For him this had been an average day. Had there been less to do, perhaps an hour's time in which to relax, he would have been unhappy. Someday, he admits, he'll probably have to slow down a little, but not for a long time yet. Last winter he collapsed twice from nervous exhaustion, but he interprets this as a sign of weakness on his part, rather than an indication the pace he leads is too fast.

Sometimes he and Jo make the late movie on a Saturday night, but as likely as not he'll be called out before it's over. Their shopping is necessarily done by mail; he feels so needed by the people he serves that it would be wrong for him to be away for even half a day.

Sunday, he told me, is his "day off." A day off from vaccinating and testing, to be sure, and he answers only emergency calls. Last Sunday's day off went like this: operate on a crushed udder, sterility shot, another udder surgery, treat case of shipping fever, deliver calf, horse with worms, cow with actinomycosis, set dog's broken leg, put cat to sleep, heifer with peritonitis, case of acute mastitis, dog with virus infection. Sunday, somehow, always seems to be emergency day.

This is the life of the country vet. This is also a part of life in Vermont today, and this young couple, whether or not they realize it yet, are Vermonters and typical of a new strength and vision in Vermont's way of life. They will bring the sign of the caduceus into the farthest valleys.

BELOW: June found the new kennels nearing completion. Soon Ray and Jo Dumas hope to start construction of a complete animal hospital.
A Vermont country winter, in the retrospect of seventy-two years, was a time of exciting and enduring pleasures for a small boy.
Winter at Concord Corner

by JAMES D. FRYE

Illustration by GEORGE DALY

Thanks to Uncle David's hard-laying biddies, I used to get long, enjoyable sleigh rides to St. Johnsbury down from snow-drifted Concord Corner every couple of weeks during the winter. To an orphan boy living on a back hill farm in 1880 that meant pure bliss.

For days I had helped gather eggs in an unheated hen house, so chill that wattles of the hens were frozen and drooped bleeding on their heads. Yet, such was uncle's know-how, they kept right on laying in sub-zero weather, while he kept on filling up drinking dishes with boiling water from a big iron kettle, and heaping feed bowls with piping hot mash.

When sufficient thirty-dozen egg cases were chockablock, my uncle led out his Morgans. I harnessed the team to his long-bodied traverse sleigh; he stowed away the eggs together with wooden firkins packed with butter as sweet as the fields of red clover where his cows grazed. Then, a buffalo robe wrapped about our knees and middles, we took the sleigh's single seat, he, in coat-skin coat of pony hide, I, in layers of winter woollens, heavy shirt, stout knee pants, hand-knit jersey, and outer coat topped by muffler and well-pulled-down cap. The sleigh swung off with a swish on snow packed hard by the passage of neighboring pungs and well-pulled-down cap. The sleigh swung off with a swish on snow packed hard by the passage of neighboring pungs and working neighborhood farmers, none as close as a half mile away.

Over single-file back hill roads we slid, the horses' breath rising frosty in chilled air, my nostrils weeping up with a pinched-in feeling, as I absorbed the cold of a 10 or 20 below zero morning.

Our ride of twelve miles would take us down Alcott Hill ("the long hill") for a full mile descent past dark timber, scintillating when the snow-heavy branches caught the sunlight, and bare hardwood trees, against the boles of which more snow lay plastered firm by high winds.

I knew a riddle about those deciduous beeches, maples, birches on either side of the narrow road; pretty catchy, too.

"Why are hardwood trees immodest? Because all winter their limbs are bare."

At St. Johnsbury—locally "The Plain"—we stopped before a general store to proffer eggs and butter in trade. Grammie needed more kerosene for lamps that glowed at lighting up time, wanted, further, a small amount of wheat flour, just 49 pounds, or only a quarter of a barrel, that is. And coffee—twenty one cents or less, the pound—was also listed.

Entranced, I watched the store keeper grind the coffee beans in his cumbersome, red, hand-turned mill. A scent to charm the gods assailed my just-thawed nostrils. Mittens were off, so I could warm my hands at the big box stove; coat hung open, that I might feel welcome heat on my body. Presently dickering ended, all surplus eggs being paid for in cash.

Next we headed up past the dignified Civil War statue of Peace or Columbia, I never knew which. The granite maiden's flowing draperies and bare arms made her look cold indeed. Our objective was The Fairbanks' Scale Company's store, run by Company hands. Awestruck, I gazed at the factory office quarters. There worked a man—the firm's treasurer, John Clark—whose salary some whispered came to one thousand dollars a year. One thousand dollars! Could any man earn this fabulous sum in one short year?

At dusk, we drove back with lightened sleigh, the Morgans pacing briskly, their circling belts of bells merrily ajingle. Lights shone out of distant farm windows; voices heard in dooryards rang strangely in the clear, quiet air.

Awaiting us would be Grammie's toasted home-made bread, well-buttered and soused in her smooth, thick milk gravy, invitingly hot. To go with this, tart apple sauce sweetened with maple sugar and prepared from apples sliced way back in October, then hung on long dangling strings near the old-fashioned two-storey Home Comfort range with baking oven high at the back. The fragrance of drying apples was as much a part of Grammie's kitchen as the tomato plants on the window sill. Or there might be fresh-baked custards in roomy brown earthen cups, their flavoring of maple syrup and unstinted use of eggs making them a rich yellow-yellow. Grammie's pot of stout tea was a "must." Our privileged house cat, of which we made a regular cosset, would have already swung through her cathole to doze near the wood-fire in the stove that gave off its faintly aromatic wood smell.

Far cry from those two-gun adventures lads of less than my eleven years seek today, this bi-monthly trip to a northern trading center—yet, to me, the height of excitement! There were, however, real sporty winter doings close to home.

Trips on a "scoot" or scooter for example. Rest assured that I had whanged out a scoot from barrel stave, upright, brace and crossboard in the barn shop—room, a boy's dream-haunt, via its hubbub of nail kegs, tools, oddments of lumber, bits of metal, and what-have-you. Be also assured that when I took off across fields frozen to a crust, nothing barred my progress, the scoot actually leaping walls and coming down with a jounce on the other side. When I swept round the home-lot bend towards my maternal uncle's farm below, I'd be going like the milltail of Tophet. How easy to carry the scoot up grade! Hook your arm under the post, circle your posterior with the stave—there you were!

Coating, of course, there was aplenty of. My sleds were usually sturdy, homemade affairs. But, once, there came in a down-country gift box from well-to-do Uncle James (who named me after himself) a real city sled, a beauty. Like its original owner, my Boston, boy-cousin, I was affectionately called "Jamie." The sled, all red, with yellow trim, and "Jamie" stencilled on the seat, was disgorged from the gift-box in the presence of one of my thirty-old first...
cousins, most of whom lived in the vicinity. Not divulging the fact, he took it home, altogether unbeknownst to me for whom it was intended. The law of first-at-the-box-first-rewarded always prevailed at such times. My grown-up brother spied this treasure in said cousin’s barn and made me the happiest boy in seven counties by returning the sled to its new namesake, “Jamie.”

Skating in the coldest of weather was another inevitable source of winter pleasure. Hall’s pond (now, romantically, “Shadow Lake”) and the old Grist Mill pond furnished wide frozen surfaces.

The very morning walk to school across snow drifted twenty feet in height, then flailed hard by fierce winds, might be called “a winter sport.” Icy gusts stung young cheeks to sunset red. Cold soon penetrated two pairs of home-knit mittens and zoomed up the most tightly buttoned coat. Whoirs of snow doing a tap dance would suddenly be flung into a small trudger’s face. Feet froze before home or school could be reached.

Once snow fell, the whole tempo of farm life changed. Chores done by day-light were performed by the flare of a barn lantern which cast ungainly flickering shadows in the bays and stalls and on barn walls. In extreme cold, our cows would amble as far as the door, shake their heads, and refuse to go to the trough, so, sloppy bucketsful of water must be carried in. Lamps were filled and cleaned more frequently, their sooted chimney globes requiring a gentle hand as Grammie or Aunt Nancy swirled a rag inside the blown glass.

And every evening took on a cozy, seasonal character.

Supper over, Uncle David, a master orchardist, filled a ten-quart milk pan with McIntoshes, blue Pearmins, Sopsie-vines and Fameuse apples from his bins. Now mingled with the scent of dried vines and Fameuse apples from his bins. Now mingled with the scent of dried

cherry bowl. My three pious, elderly brothers, !and I, to the kitchen bedroom.

Upstairs in an unfinished chamber, with nothing but pieced quilts and a rare woolen blanket for cover, Grammie spent thousands of winter nights on her feather bed, with the whole north country blowing its will through the chinks in that old plank farmhouse. Thus, perhaps, she lived to be nearly ninety.

One evening copied another. Some nights, beechnuts in place of pop corn. Uncle David and I carefully cracking the wrinkled shells “long end to,” in order to extract the toothsome meats whole. Some nights, checkers or dominoes, played on the cheerful red table cover under mellow lamplight. Now and again, for variety, the arrival of a tin peddler or drummer—the radio and television sets of my time—who brought word of a distant world and paid for his lodging with tidbits of news and political gossip.

Christmas really marked the setting-in of winter. Its simple celebration was a truly communal affair. Church women were chosen as a tree-decorating committee. Children learned uplifting “pieces” from Fifth Readers. As many as three huge spruce trees were hewn and set up at the front of the church by male members. These were garnished with snowy popcorn strings, cranberry garlands, striped candy canes, and net bags of sweets. Families placed all personal gifts as well as gifts for friends in the parish under these pungent-smelling trees for distribution on the anticipated day. Even in 1880 a certain gift-rivalry existed, the somewhat innocently snobbish vying with one another to make a splurge when gifts were called, by the presentation of a set of dishes or a coonskin coat or an envied Singer sewing machine. This Christmas-tree-sharing made for very real community spirit, none-the-less.

Kitchen junkets, held in any season, became extra enjoyable in winter. Of course, no hostess dismantled her range to make more room for dancers in January as she might have done in June. A tingling zest was added to square and string dances, automatically, what with guests arriving wind-blown and half-frozen from twenty mile drives in open sleighs. Some local fiddler who could jig up a tune (How our old blind fiddler could play!) was every bit of orchestration needed. Grandparents and grandchildren both attended, for we antedated the pitiful segregation of generations. So I sometimes was found among young fry pressed against the wall, as farm boys and girls took to wide kitchen floorboards.

Scrape, scrape, went the bow flying over cattail. Thump, thump, went country-shod feet. “Turkey in the Straw,” “Bricklayers’ Hornpipe,” “Money Musk.”

Outside, snow to the eaves; temperature, fallen another degree to thirty four below; north wind howling weirdly. Inside, warmth and simple jollity. Little Jamie Frye gazing at all this with delight...

Promptly with the coming of bedtime...
RFD Carrier Albert Danforth finds his registered Morgan, “Polly” invaluable on “rural routes.” The sleigh, borrowed for the occasion of Mr. Pete’s photographs, is owned by Dr. Howard Farmer of St. Johnsbury. To the left is Mrs. F. E. Bickford’s home, one of the oldest in Danville. With Mr. Danforth are Mrs. Pete and Mary Lund of Lancaster, N. H. The same group appeared on our last Winter’s cover.
Popcorn balls by the thousands are made by this Burlington couple—just for the fun of giving.

It all began several years ago when a newcomer to Burlington dressed up in a Santa Claus suit and made the rounds of his neighborhood, calling on the families there. Ethan Howard, of 399 South Winooski Avenue, looking out of his living room window saw Santa Claus dancing and waving in front of the house. He stepped to the door and invited him in. They talked about many things and Mr. Howard grew more impressed with this
man who would go to the trouble of getting into a Santa Claus suit to bring the spirit of Christmas to so many homes.

"Do you have anything in your pack to give to the children where you call?" he asked. "No," Santa Claus replied, "I just stop in for a little visit." So right then Mr. Howard called his wife in from the kitchen where she was finishing a batch of popcorn balls. They filled Santa’s pack with the luscious balls and told him to come back for more when those were gone. That year they made one hundred balls and the next year two hundred.

Now they make more than two thousand, just for the fun of giving them to someone. They supply many civic clubs, schools and church groups. They always furnish a good number for the Burlington High School band concert sales. Incidentally, Ethan and Jennie Howard have missed only two concerts since the B.H.S. band was organized in 1926. Their son, Ethan, Jr., now a practicing physician in Manchester, New Hampshire, was a drum major when he was in high school.

Every year the Howards buy a whole field of popcorn grown in Colchester by a University of Vermont student, who thereby helps finance his education. They put the corn in cloth bags and hang it in the basement to season until they are ready to use it. Then Mr. Howard pops it in a huge old-fashioned popper. He never burns a kernel. He says instinct tells him how high above the burner to hold the popper—and he keeps it shaking very fast.

Mr. Howard has an appointment barber shop right in his home. He’s been cutting hair for many years—says he’s working on the fourth generation in some cases. His customers became interested in his popcorn project. One now contributes big boxes that hold as much as forty-eight quarts of popped corn. Another gives him paper bags just the right size to hold the popcorn balls and furnishes string to tie them.

While Mr. Howard is the specialist in popping the corn, it is Jennie Howard who makes the delicious syrup that always comes out just right for shaping the balls. And here is her recipe for making 55 to 60 popcorn balls:

Have ready 12 quarts freshly popped corn, slightly salted. Make a syrup by cooking together in a saucepan 3 cups granulated sugar, \( \frac{3}{4} \) cup molasses, \( \frac{1}{4} \) cup vinegar, \( \frac{1}{4} \) cup water and 1 teaspoon salt to 265° (or until it forms a brittle ball when dropped in cold water from the tip of a spoon). Remove from fire and lightly stir in \( \frac{1}{2} \) heaping tablespoon of butter, \( \frac{1}{4} \) level teaspoon of soda and \( \frac{1}{2} \) teaspoon vanilla. Pour this syrup over the corn, mix well and form into balls.

Mr. Howard does the mixing while Mrs. Howard dips her hands in cold water from the faucet and quickly makes the balls. They are always perfect in shape and flavor. Then the Howards put each ball in a paper bag and tie it with a green string. It’s quite a production line.

More than two thousand popcorn balls—just for the fun of giving them away! You may wonder why they do it. It’s because they like people and like to give them pleasure. Jennie Howard has long been known for her good cooking. She has been active for years in Home Demonstration work. Ethan Howard is a philosopher of sorts—his customers are his friends. He says he likes to think they leave the shop, not only looking better but feeling better! That’s the same spirit that makes the Howards have such a good time turning out popcorn balls so that hundreds of youngsters may have a better Christmas. END
ABOVE: It takes an aerial view of Bromley to show the 1,000 acres of skiing on the seven open slopes and eight trails. The Boulevard swings from summit to extreme left to base. East Meadows at right.

BELOW: Looking toward the base from part way up the Lord’s Prayer area, first of Bromley’s big open slope areas, built in 1948 with its own J-Stick lift. Part of area shows at left in Aerial above.

BELOW RIGHT: Sally Pabst, wife of the Bromley owner, and Neil Robinson, Bromley Ski School head, at the summit of Bromley Mountain on the Boulevard. Mt. Equinox provides the backdrop.

About the Author: Pat Harty, who writes a daily ski column for The Boston Globe, broadcasts over WBZ, does television sports work, is a Bellows Falls, Vermont native. He first skied at Vermont Academy in 1925, later did some jumping and has skied all over this country and Eastern Canada. He was educated at St. Michael’s College, Winooski Park, is as avid a fisherman as skier. He thinks “Eastern skiing is far ahead of the western variety in its development, except for Sun Valley.”

Harty, with Frank Elkins of the New York Times and Henry Moore of The Boston Herald, is one of the top Eastern ski writers.
Bromley Mountain, seven miles up Route 11 from the beautiful Vermont town of Manchester, is a riot of ever moving color on any weekend after the first winter snows carpet its maze of slopes and ski trails.

Its dazzling coat of white is a perfect backdrop for the cluster of bright red buildings that warm and feed thousands of skiers, as they also please the artistic sense.

It is an area that has a drug-like attraction for any skier who has ever gone to the summit on its J-Stick lifts, paused for a few minutes to savor the three-state view before plunging down some one of its many runs to the base station.

Fred Pabst, son of a Milwaukee brewer, has hewn 1,000 acres of skiable runs, that include slopes as smooth as putting greens, from the south side of Bromley Mountain. Seven major slopes and eight ski trails served by a network of four fast-moving J-Stick lifts (a device against which a skier sits as it draws him up the mountain on his skis), have made it one of the outstanding ski areas of America.

Pabst has concentrated on one objective ever since he built his first rope tow on this mountain in 1939. He has expended a half million dollars toward this end. “We are going to move more skiers than any other area,” stated the tall well built veteran sportsman and ski pioneer. “Any work we can do to give the skiers more for their ski dollar is worthwhile. We will keep at it till we satisfy them, or bust a tendon in the attempt.”
Dynamite, bulldozers, and thousands of man hours of hard work have had their effect.

Bromley's slopes are smoothed to the point where novice skiers, with a working knowledge of the snowplow turn, can ride the lifts to the summit and ski all the way back to the base.

In addition a further development known as the Lords Prayer has been carved out of the timber with its own lift starting only feet from the base lift that goes to the summit.

"That's the answer," emphasized Pabst, "spread those skiers who used to hang close to the bottom all over the mountain and you solve half the problem."

"We have plenty of steep and testing trails such as the Pabst Peril, Blue Ribbon, the Shincracker and the Avalanche for the speed merchants who can handle their skis well."

"Eighty-five percent of the skiers are not equal to those runs yet, so we have the upper and lower Boulevard, the West Meadow, the Ridge and Yodeler slopes in the Snowbowl area and the Pushover trail all the way to the top of the mountain, where they can ski without having to worry about dips and sheer drops. Those runs are as smooth as a billiard table."

Installation of a giant clock, overlooking the line waiting for a ride up the lift from the base station, proved to the tremendous crowd that skied there on last Washington's Birthday that the waiting period averaged less than 18 minutes. In older days an hour was par for the course.

When exhausted ticket-sellers tooted up their tallies for that holiday they showed that 2800 skiers had bought one half day or all day tickets. But at no time were more than a few hundred skiers evident around the base station, proving that Pabst is beginning to realize on his fondest dream.

But Fred is not one to remain long in status quo.

"We are working on plans for a restaurant either half way up the mountain or at the summit so that our worst bugaboo of last winter will also be licked," he stated at his summer home on Orrs Island in Maine where he and his pretty wife, former racing skier Sally Litchfield, gather their strength for another winter as they swim and boat with their two children, Ricky (six) and Paula (four).

"All the skiers come tearing down the mountain at noontime, eat quickly and then want to get right back up the lift again. If we can feed half of them up there, with that wonderful view to enjoy during the midday break, then we should show even more progress than in the past," he noted.

"Last winter was the biggest year in our history but it points out to us that the growth of the ski sport in the past few years is nothing to what it will be in the next few years if we have snow. Ski area owners really have an obligation to the skiers and we at Bromley are trying our best."

Fred Pabst is in a class by himself when it comes to the ski business, for he was the first to envisage a chain store type of ski operation that would extend from coast to coast.

After graduation from the University of Wisconsin and graduate work at Harvard Business School he returned to his native state to work in the family breweries.

A few ski jumping Norwegians and their home-made trestle brought him as a spectator just once. His next visit he brought along skis and boots and tried it himself. Several shoulder separations and some nasty bruises later he mastered the art of ski flying. His record as a fearless big game hunter, already acquired, guaranteed he would.

But this taste of the sport kindled a love for speed on a pair of skis that only further knowledge could satisfy.

After learning all that Hannes Schneider could teach him in his then embryonic ski school in St. Anton in the Tyrol Alps of Austria, he headed for Canada and its Laurentian Mountains, north of the metropolitan city of Montreal.

He established Canada's first permanent rope tow in 1935 at St. Sauveur. The only other tow was at Shawbridge. This was a Model T Ford, using its left rear wheel for a power unit. This car returned to the highway, come the Spring thaws.
ABOVE: This is a section of the Boulevard before dynamite, bull­dozers, thousands of man hours completed the 1 ½-mile ski highway.

ABOVE: This is the “after” view of the location shown at left, entire summit-to-base trail, now skiable on four inches of packed snow.

BELOW: The Lord’s Prayer giant open slope area, looking from the Route 11 parking area, is one of Bromley’s most popular sections for thousands of skiers. A special J-Stick lift carries skiers from the base station through the trees at right to the top of the broad, open run.
ABOVE: It took 1400 sticks of dynamite to smooth this ledge on the Upper Boulevard.

LEFT: Array of flags of skiing nations flies from sundeck of Wild Boar restaurant.

BELOW LEFT: Photographer Courtney Hafela shows Sally Pabst big Maurer camera used to make new Bromley sound-color movie, ready for groups and ski clubs this winter free. Hafela now lives in Andover, Vt.

BELOW: Ski classes are fitted to skier’s skill. Bromley’s Certified instructors gave a record 452 lessons one day last year. Director Neil Robinson will head the adult classes, new Nursery and the Kiddies’ Ski Schools.
Bromley’s specially-designed J-Stick lifts are safe, comfortable and easy to ride, even for youngsters. The four lifts can carry 3520 skiers per hour. Since last winter Bromley has more than doubled its smoothed trails and giant open slopes. Restaurant in background.

Each year he added another to his chain of tows until the problems of absentee ownership and promotion, plus being years ahead of the demand, made him give up the idea of national domination and think more of concentrating in one spot, near Manchester, Vt.

In the meantime he had written pages of ski history in widely separated areas as at Huckin’s Hill in Plymouth, N. H., Mount Aeolus in East Dorset, Vt., Lake George, N. Y., Intervale, N. H. in 1936, and Wausau, Wis., 200 miles outside Milwaukee.

Skiing had bumbled along till 1939 when Fred built a rope tow on what is now the West Meadow run at Big Bromley. This rope tow was unique in that it had a turn in the up-ski route in its 2200 foot length.

This tow sufficed until 1942 when Fred’s natural restlessness asserted itself and he began construction of his first J-Stick lift on the mountain. It still stands as the main lift from the base station, but hardly an original bolt or nut remains. It has been completely rebuilt as many times as Fred has seen a new idea that would make it run smoother or faster.

He progressed slowly as the nation fought itself through and out of World War II, but then he threw the machinery of construction into high gear. Two more lifts and several trails later he decided that American skiing will never be the same as the European model, for weekend skiing is the pattern here.

American skiers have only a short time to practice...
their most beloved sport each week and they want all the downhill they can crowd into that short space of time. Smooth well-conditioned slopes and a fast ride back up the mountain are the answers.

Then began the biggest job of rock farming Vermont had ever seen. He blasted, bulldozed, and hand grubbed big wide open slopes that Whistler’s Grandmother might have skied. Next came a planting project to anchor the soil, so that spring freshets down the side of the mountain would not wash it down to the base station.

Last winter and its heavy snow proved he is on the right track and justified his constant efforts during three years when the snows did not come. Despite tremendous pounding by the largest crowds in the areas’ history the skiing continued good day after day.

But Fred is not satisfied. Daily he phones Bert Mauldin, mountain foreman whose Arkansas drawl seems strange on a Vermont mountainside, but who loves Bromley now as he formerly boasted of the wonders of Little Rock. Each day they expand their planning.

Fred depends on Bert a lot, for his legs have given him a bad time for the past two years. Climbing the Matterhorn many years ago resulted in two seriously frozen legs. It has slowed up his skiing a bit, but he will still be kibitzing the form of your writer when we swing down the mountain this winter.

New cuttings and smoothing in the West Meadow, the Yodler slope, Twister & Pushover trails, will bring high speed and perfect control skiing right into the laps of the hundreds of spectators who visit the area each weekend. Fred still has hundreds of acres that he can develop as the need arises and plans already exist in the recesses of his cranium; plans that he and Bert formulate over a few leisure moments at the base station.

Bromley's Ski School will be under the direction of Neil Robinson of Rutland, Vermont. Neil, a veritable gymnast on skis, will be surrounded by a staff of assistants, every one of whom will be a certified ski instructor wearing the coveted pin given in competitive tests to the top teachers of the sport.

A staff of one hundred will be hard at work providing all the services Fred feels are so necessary for the proper conduct of his area.

Sitting upstairs in the Chanticleer building where he maintains a mountainside office will be Fred Pabst, who has built all this.

As an onlooker who has watched this mountain develop we would like to close this epistle with this statement.

"The story of Bromley Mountain really is the story of Fred Pabst. The two are inseparable. His insatiable appetite for the perfect in ski areas is Vermont’s guarantee that his ski spot will always be at the top."
ABOVE: Skiers off the Lower Lift traverse into the newly smoothed West Meadow. First development on Bromley began here 14 years ago.

BELOW: Skiers starting down the mile-and-a-half Boulevard have a breathtaking view. Stratton Mountain rises in the background.

Peter Beah
CHILDREN'S COUNTRY
Winter or Summer
Country children seem to find the most fun in things they do and make themselves, and in the world outdoors.

A pretty big part of any region, anywhere, of why it is what it is, and what it will become, is the children who grow up there.

Take a season and a year. Pick a week and a village. Try Jacksonville, Vermont early in December.

Things are a little different here in winter. It's a small village, and folks who live here the year 'round have to do for themselves so many of the things that a telephone call or a stop at the corner store will accomplish in other places. So too, the children, since they can't run around the corner to a movie or soda fountain, make their days full with a sharpened inventiveness.
Schools haven't been centralized here yet, and if you'll watch a schoolyard snowball fight, or the children helping with the lunch dishes you may be inclined to agree with those of this town who hold out for the old way and the one-room schoolhouse.
Winter Holidays may mean—
School Plays,
Things to eat,
Snowball fights,
A Christmas tree.

All the district schools do come together at North River Hall down in the village, each grade presenting its own program to a community audience. The chuckles are sympathetic and neighborly when one of the youngsters misses a line, and it's still the children's day when everyone meets afterward in the big room downstairs for popcorn balls and cider.
It's all a little old fashioned, and maybe popcorn balls and Christmas-tree cutting and hot lunches around a big table in a one-room school won't appeal to children or grown-ups either who are used to other sections and other ways. But like it or not, and most of us do or we wouldn't stay, this is all a part of winter in a Vermont village.

This life and these children are Vermont in the years to come—and we aren't worrying any.

Then, since this is December and Christmas is getting closer, there is all the half-suppressed excitement that goes with the season. Like everywhere, the kids can't wait to decorate the Christmas tree, but unlike most other places, here they cut the tree and bring it in themselves.
The Chittenden County Mills is almost a century old. The sturdy walls of flat-spiked two-by-sixes have outlived its bustling past as the first roller flour mill in Vermont. It stands by Browns River in Jericho not used today except for storage, but it's still as sound as the stone first story where James H. Hutchinson just back from the California goldrush established a grist mill. He began to grind a little flour as well for neighboring farmers, just to fill their own needs.

Some 30 years later Lucien Howe added the Mill's plank superstructure and roller mill machinery. Western wheat began arriving in Jericho on the Burlington & Lamoille Railroad, itself a memory now. Granulated meal, middlings, bran (at $10 per ton), graham flour and some buckwheat came from the Chittenden Mills. For years it turned out Howe's Best Flour (at $4 to $5 the barrel) and big gray horses delivered it all over Northwestern Vermont, the big wagons rumbling back to Jericho with loads of empty barrels.

That's all gone now. The Western mills proved too strong. But George Miller, Herbert Hutchinson and a few others now in their eighties, remember. The old mill, its roller machines removed and its cupola-eovered grain elevator silent, seems to be waiting, ready to take on some new and busy life.

VERMONT Life 31
Some Vermont Ways
by Vrest Orton

If winter is not the best time to plan for a summer journey, I don't know what is. Sitting in front of the fireplace, on a cold evening, with a dish of popcorn in my lap and a syllabub on the table beside me, the howling winds outdoors were bound to turn my thoughts toward next summer and what I would do, if I had never seen Vermont before, to see Vermont plain and fresh.

I would, of course, plan forthwith to get off the main trunk highways and devote as many days as I could to exploring in that fascinating back country of Vermont...the state," as Phil Cummings calls it, "within the state," where the genuine old-time rural charm still waits to be discovered by the traveler who is willing to make a little effort and chance a little adventure.

This is the country of the narrow, winding gravel roads. But a hard packed gravel road, through the cool deep woods on a hot summer day, is an experience not related to the macadam and cement and the string of roadside stands.

This is the country where, at the top of a rise, the road turns around a clump of white birches and you will see an old unpainted farm house, with a red barn, and a stone wall, and in front of the house a bunch of lilacs that bloom in summer.

This is the state within Vermont that can not be revealed for the good of the soul unless you are willing to take your time and slowly, carefully and quietly savour the rich values of this region of lovely close-cropped upland pastures, winding hill roads beside mountain streams, well watered high valleys, and inviting stretches of shaded wood land.

Of the thousands of people who journey up the back road to Weston, where I live, to enjoy this old-time village, a great many express surprise and delight that they have, at last, got off the traffic-worried main lines and discovered for the first time that part of Vermont which many of us think typifies the true beauty of our Green Mountain state. I have mapped out so many tours for these happy visitors so they could have adventures in the back country, that I'm going to give readers of Vermont Life a couple of hints on how to begin discovering the state within the state.

Naturally, of the hundreds of miles of back roads throughout Vermont, I can point out only a few in this issue, but I do suggest that you get the state map from the Development Commission, and buy that splendid book edited by Dana Doten:—"Vermont, A Guide to the Green Mountain State" (the American Guide Series) and plan a trip of your own.

THE LAKE COUNTRY OF VERMONT

One of the most unusual, and utterly beautiful sections of northern Vermont is, I think, the relatively neglected lake country north of Montpelier. While the main roads through Calais, Woodbury, Hardwick and Greensboro are well traveled, few venture off these highways into the quiet byways, those extremely narrow, tree-canopied dirt roads. In practically every depression of this glacial terrain is a lovely pond or lake.

Leaving Montpelier, you go up Clay Hill to the north and over a winding road that climbs steadily into the hills to Maple Corner, near a pleasant lake. Thence to Kents Corner where the Kent family built the now famous Kent tavern owned by the Vermont Historical Society. From here you turn northeast to North Calais, once 50 years ago a thriving community and now practically deserted. The village, of course, is a big page in my personal memory book for it was here that my father established his store and here, as a boy, I ranged and roamed the hills, fished in the lakes and built up an irrevocable love for the Vermont back country that can not be taken away or lessened as the years go by. At the edge of this village is a gem of a pond, lying in a deep valley, pressed in by steep-wooded hills where peace and tranquility reign. You feel hundreds of miles away from the troubled world. Swinging around the pond (they call it Mirror Lake now) and up the hill, you skirt several other ponds, hidden in the deep valleys and come out into Hardwick Gulf. Vermont gulfs are deep ravines between the steep hills and were they not there, no roads could penetrate our mountain fastness. You can stop in Woodbury and discover some of the 32 ponds that, it is said, are found within this six mile square township. Perch, bass and pickerel fishing abounds in these hidden lakes.

Going on to Hardwick, once 50 years ago the granite center of the world, but now noted for its annual Tulip Festival, you turn northeast to East Hardwick, a pleasant little village. There you leave the short section of highway and branch off again to Caspian Lake, one of our most beautiful bodies of water, and the summer home of a distinguished group of the Princeton faculty. This lake, where many Vermonters have cottages, has fine boating and swimming and abounds in lake trout.

The back road up to Craftsbury should be ventured next for you are not only in the lake country of Vermont, but on the high lands of the Green Mountain range, where long vistas of the rolling hills and mountain peaks touching the sky can now be seen, with a foreground carpet of wooded regions and small farms. Your objective is Craftsbury Common, one of the three most beautiful villages in Vermont. This upland village occupying a high plateau and clustered around a village green or Common (the original pattern of the New England village) has kept its charm, its nostalgic tradition, and some of its fine old houses, now restored by people like Mrs. Ross who discovered this lovely spot years ago. Here is, as the Green Mountain Guide says, "a quality of airy clearness and light, a happy blending of tasteful architecture with the charm of natural setting...."

Now, if you are still bent on real adventure, you can go north on Route 12B to Albany where you turn right and cross the Craftsbury-IRasburg shortcut and come to South Albany. Then you go on to West Glover and land in Barton, bounded by Crystal Lake, where you will find a picnic area, and overnight accommodations, fishing facilities and a fine beach. Then to the most beautiful of all Vermont lakes, Willoughby, which lies still further east. Flanked by a magnificent and picturesque cliff, Willoughby is a deep body of water. Around the shores are all kinds of camps, and many other facilities for the visitor who wants to stay to fish, swim or enjoy the boating.

This tour, from Montpelier to Willoughby Lake, can be made in a day. But to savour its full flavor you should take two days. You can't imbibe the true values of our back road country by hurrying. Never drive over 35 miles an hour, and park when you see a vista that looks intriguing. Stop when a little pond or roadside brook beckons. It will then take you two days, but two days that you will never forget.

A SOUTHERN VERMONT TOUR

If you leave Route 7 at Danby (just a few miles north of Manchester) it will introduce you quickly to some real mountain country and show you 20 miles of wilderness without a house, gas station, roadside stand, or billboard ever. To the east of Danby is Mt. Tabor, one of Vermont's smallest townships. Here you go up and up the mountain road, built and built well by the C.C.C. boys back in
mission has been trying to restore this
town cemetery and has, with state money,
built new stone walls and steps up to the
Coolidge resting place.

Now, you have to take a main highway
for a spell to get to Woodstock ... this
is not back country but Woodstock is
one of Vermont’s finest villages with its
stately and interesting examples of 18th
century domestic architecture. Also at
Woodstock the skiing business saw its
birth in Vermont ... for here was the
first ski tow and Woodstock is still a
very active winter sports center. Its fine
hotels make it one of the most delightful
places to stop at any time of year.

From Weston, if you are still brave
and want to climb Mount Terrible, over
which a narrow winding road goes to
Ludlow, (Route 100) you can, at Ludlow,
leave the main cement road and start
up the valley to Plymouth. Here you
will pass several pretty little lakes,
egged in tightly between high hills,
before you arrive at the birthplace of
Calvin Coolidge. The President was born
here and the homestead where he spent
most of his summers when President lives
across the road and is still occupied by
Mrs. Coolidge and her son John and
family.

The Vermont Historic Sites Com-
mission is restoring the old 2 1/2 story Wilder
House, adjacent to the Coolidge Home-
stead and, if enough money is available
so this work is done by the summer of
1933, the state will have a real hospitality
center here for the thousands who still
revere Calvin Coolidge and all that he
stood for. Slightly south of the village
lies the sloping cemetery where the President and his son Calvin lie buried
side by side, under simple granite head-
stones. The Vermont Historic Sites Com-
A country road near Plymouth.

But we must get on the back roads
again and so we start up into Pomfret.
There is something about this township
that makes it unique. Here the hills are
wooded on top, but the close-cropped,
rushing mountain stream tumbling over
stones way below ... a breathtaking sight.
Once you get on top, elevation over 2000
feet, you will be at what is still known as
the “Old Job.” Years ago this was a
thriving lumbering village of some 25
houses ... now all gone. Nature has taken
over. Keeping on this fine dirt road, which
runs alongside a good trout stream, you
will come to the village of Langswroth,
restored some years ago by Samuel Ogden
who still runs his forge there and makes all
manner of wrought iron implements.

Then you start downhill and into my
own village of Weston, probably the most
famous, nationally, of all Vermont vil-
lages. Its restoration project has been
ongoing on here for 15 years and it has been
written about in many national maga-
azines. You can spend a whole day in this
old-time village, letting nostalgia creep
up on you and forgetting your troubles
whilst the world goes by. If you want to
swim there is Hapgood pond, in Lang-
swroth, and four miles north of Weston,
in the middle of the woods, is the Green
Mountain Forest Picnic Area on Green-
dale brook.

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THE MYSTERIOUS ROOSTER

by Catharine Hershey Oldham

There he was—a carrousel masterpiece, four-and-a-half feet high, perfectly sculptured, a commanding wooden rooster with swirling tail plumage and a noble, proud strut. He was showy and exciting to look at!

The picture of this handsome red and white rooster appeared not long ago in Erwin Christensen’s Index of American Design, sponsored by the National Gallery of Art. The picture legend said: “Designed and made by a Vermont cabinet maker in St. Johnsbury, Vermont.”

He must have been quite a gay young bird, this rooster now recorded as owned by someone in Connecticut. But what skilled craftsman had carved this beautiful creature and where did he belong? That was the mystery.

The National Gallery of Art threw down the gauntlet when it catalogued him as of St. Johnsbury origin, without giving any hint as to his family tree. Miss Cornelia T. Fairbanks, librarian of the Athenaeum, studied his picture and became interested in finding out more about him and about the craftsman who had designed him. Someone just had to accept the challenge!

I was given the assignment of tracking down the story of the rooster, by an editor of the local daily paper, the Caledonian-Record, who knew how much fun it would be to follow such a trail. I spent hours and hours on the telephone, until I finally happened to call Wilbur Hill, because a member of his family had owned a modern Merry-go-Round.

At first he couldn’t think who might have made the rooster—“but, then, come to think of it” he reminisced “there used to be a cabinet maker here who did have a Merry-go-Round and I think he did make the animal mounts himself.”

Mr. Hill couldn’t remember the woodcarver’s first name, but thought his last name was Brown. He informed me that Brown had married into the Clouthier family here and told me whom to call for more information. That was the all-important lead.

It was through the family of the craftsman’s wife that I learned about Edmond Brown, the gifted woodcarver, whose carrousel rooster had finally appeared in an important book. In a few hours, a sister of Mrs. Brown’s had eagerly searched her attic and the family albums and had found the picture of little Caroline Brown riding a-rooster-back on this very same rooster, on the carrousel of ancient vintage. This was the proof needed.

I found that Edmond Brown, who came to St. Johnsbury as a young man from Canada, had designed the twenty-four carrousel animals and also did some important carving which is still cherished in the town in which he made his home for a number of years.

Brown only moved away from here in 1918, when he went to live in Connecticut, but it was difficult to find people who remembered much about him or his creative talents—outside of the members of his wife’s family.

Edmond Brown married Miss Lea Clouthier, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Clouthier of St. Johnsbury. The Browns had five daughters. All of the children took a lively interest in the family carrousel project, according to Mrs. Glenn Cheever, a daughter living in Waterford. The sisters found their father a delightful companion and they enjoyed helping him with his work. She says that whenever he finished a new mount, he would pass out pieces of sandpaper and they would all go to work to smooth and polish the newest addition to the Merry-Go-Round family of animals. The roosters seemed to be the favorite mounts.

After Brown’s identity was discovered, various men in town recalled the times they used to step into his woodworking shops on South Main street or later in the one on Hastings hill, to watch him work. The self-taught carver made the carrousel as well as all the mounts himself. His wife made the canvas top on her sewing machine. She also did the expert painting of the saddles and the gold trimming. It took the cabinet maker five years to

(Continued on page 36)
complete the carrousel, doing it all after regular working
days and on holidays.

The carrousel was first set up for business on a lot off
Bay street, almost opposite Hastings street. Its first out-
of-state trip was to Bethlehem, N. H., where it was
shipped in sections by freight. There it was met by a
horse-drawn dray and transported to the fair grounds, on
the first of its many travels. It was run by a gasoline
engine and cable and boasted a gay hand organ.

The only other figure of the carrousel animals known
to remain in this vicinity is the little white horse, whose
wood has aged and deteriorated and who long since had
to be re-shod after galloping so many years and so many
miles on the carrousel highway.

For years, this cherished possession on a rocking
horse stand had been a landmark. Its winning face and
little prancing feet came into sight at the bend of the
Passumpsic road on the lawn of the R. J. Salt farm.

Mr. and Mrs. Salt acquired the little horse as a toy for
their son when he was three years old. Mrs. Salt’s brother
had purchased three of the carrousel horses at a time
when they were being disposed of. He was certainly a
distinctive toy and everyone noticed him, when after
being made over into a rocking horse he graced the farm
lawn for years, but no one ever dreamed that later he
would be living in reflected glory.

During the years when he had stood his ground on the
front lawn of the Salt farm he looked so lifelike that
horses driven on the nearby highway would often neigh
a greeting as they passed along. The Salts brought him
down from the attic, glued and mended his wobbly head,
and gave him a new coat of white paint. Then they went
abroad in the neighboring Whitehill farm pasture in
search of a light blonde cow. They “borrowed” a tail for
little Dobbin, so that he could appear in full dress to have
his picture taken. Mrs. Salt told the photographer how
on the night before they had tried all sorts of bleaches
and washing compounds on the ends of the cow’s tail—
to no avail.

No trace of the other two ponies can be found. Another
of the carrousel horses was for a time a model in a harness shop window on Eastern avenue in St. Johnsbury. He was sold when the shop changed hands and no one seems to know what became of him.

One of the finest examples of Brown's woodcarvings is the lifelike owl with outspread wings, carved of mahogany and perched on the head board of a lovely four poster bed in the home of the craftsman's granddaughter on Harvey street. It is a bit startling to behold this wide-awake owl as a sleepy time guardian. The bed, itself, a beautifully carved piece, whose posts are topped with gracefully cut pineapples and decorated the entire length with carved swirls and ornamented with a design of carved acanthus leaves near the square bases of the posts is especially valued by members of the family.

Each feather in the broad sweeping wings of this owl—"habitual keeper of late hours" is finely carved with unusual skill and the design on each small wing feather stands out like an etching. The owl's realistically carved feet clutch the rung of the head board, just aloft of the sleeper's pillow.

In the same room in this house are a dresser, bench and stool carved by the talented designer. At the stair's head stands a carved replica of one of Brown's grandsons, wearing a Dutch haircut, suit and collar of the style worn in the days of Buster Brown. The figure is of highly polished dark brown wood.

A pulpit and the baptismal font, which he carved for the Notre Dame des Victoires church, and which were placed there in token of his friendship for Father Eugene Drouin, pastor of the church at the time, show the designer's skill in fine detail work. On the panels of the octagonal baptismal font are carvings depicting John the Baptist, as a child with a lamb; the other panels are ornamented with sprays and floral designs. The large pulpit has a base of pillars supporting it. Its top is decorated with a floral design and with foils.

For members of his family Brown designed elaborately carved chests. In the granddaughter's home on Harvey street there is a chiffonier, a large carved mirror frame and a bench and stool—all watched over by the fantastic owl sitting on the head board of the bed.

Of the rooster, pictured in Christensen's Index of American Design, the author says: "To my mind it is a consistent design in which line and pattern have been effectively combined. The artist was in no way confused by any notions of realism. Though we recognize a rooster, there is much about this design that is abstract, with only a faint suggestion of appearances. He used the various parts of the rooster's anatomy to create free, ornamental and structural pattern. I dare say it must have been his creation, it is so unique and deliberate and has such great unity. I suspect any instructor of design would take to this bird as a first rate example to demonstrate rhythm."

Edmond Brown, who was born in 1870 in Canada, died in Hartford, Conn. in 1940. He is buried in Mt. Calvary Cemetery in St. Johnsbury, beside his wife, Lea, who died in 1932.
Rug-Hooking at Pittsford

AND HOW IS YOUR husband today?” a friend inquired of Mrs. George H. Paul of Pittsford one bright Monday morning.

“Oh, he’s fine,” Mrs. Paul replied. “He’s out in the kitchen dying!”

Haply the friend realized that “dying” referred to the Reverend Paul’s activities in dyeing material for his wife’s rug-hooking classes!

Rug-hooking has been Mrs. Paul’s hobby for the past seven years. And, in the past two years, she has created classes which are typical of the several similar groups in other Vermont communities. “Rug-hooking is a most stimulating and worth-while pastime,” she says. “And teaching it is so rewarding!”

When she and her husband moved to Pittsford three years ago, the women of the town, fascinated by her hooked rugs, eagerly approached her with requests for a rug-hooking class. Although Mrs. Paul had learned the art for her own pleasure with no intention of teaching, she finally agreed to introduce the Pittsford women to the basic techniques. Demand for her time and teaching has increased to such an extent since her first class meeting in Pittsford that now—with classes in Rutland, West Rutland, Proctor, Florence and Pittsford—she must refuse new enrollees and classes.

“There aren’t enough hours in the week,” she bewails, “I hate to refuse the ladies for I so enjoy teaching them. I

Hooking rugs can be an art, a practical hobby and even a profitable business. Typical of several Vermont communities are Pittsford’s classes.

LEFT: Comparing their rugs are Mrs. Paul Towne & Mrs. Wm. Denison of Pittsford.

by PEGGY PRATT

Photography by Alice Sewall

BELOW: Hilda Macomber likes the stair runner hooked for her mother by Mrs. Paul.
Above: In full swing at the home of Mrs. Paul Towne is Mrs. Paul’s Pittsford class. At work on their rugs are (left to right) Miss Martha Adams of Rutland, Mrs. Paul looking on, Mrs. Towne, Mrs. Denison, Mrs. Robert Sird and Mrs. Henry Phillips, all of Pittsford.

Think, too, that the classes have been wonderful for them—especially those who are ill or shut-in. Many have explained that they have never used their time so profitably! Although I had never contemplated teaching rug-hooking, I have been very happy to have the privilege of showing the women what I know so that they can go ahead on their own to experience the pleasure and satisfaction that comes from hooking rugs!

Despite Mrs. Paul’s modest accounts of her pedagogical ability, her pupils praise her as a splendid teacher. Mrs. Paul herself knows the value of fine instruction, having learned rug-hooking from Mrs. Clara Brown of Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, one of New England’s prominent colorists.

“The technique of hooking is not too difficult,” she explains. The burlap upon which the pattern is stamped is fastened tightly on a frame. A strand of all-wool colored cloth is held on the under side of the burlap, caught from the top side with a fine crochet hook, pulled through the burlap, and left in a small loop. Loops are pulled about one eighth inch apart, the strand being kept tight on the wrong side of the material. The pattern is worked first; the background filled in later in a complementary color. Flowers and other motifs are worked from the center outward and usually shaded from dark (center) to light (edges). To create variation in texture, patterns and backgrounds are sheared in some sections. The completed rug is then ready for use. Even with hard use, hooked rugs will last for years and years. As a helpful hint in care of rugs, however, Mrs. Paul advises, “Never shake a rug, any rug. It splits the burlap.”

The preparation of the woolen material—dyeing, drying, and cutting—is Mr. Paul’s contribution to his wife’s classes. He begins the dyeing process early in the morning of his Monday-holidays. In a seven quart kettle, he boils the woolen mill-ends one-half hour in a dye bath—he uses Perfection dye. For dyeing most colors, he starts with white cloth, but for many of the deeper shades he uses a pastel cloth of the same hue. “This method,” he explains, “produces a richer toned cloth than would dyeing a deep color from the white cloth.”

A half hour of boiling tints the white cloth to the lightest tone of any hue. For each progressively darker shade, the cloth is boiled one-half hour in a stronger dye bath. When eight or ten shades have been produced, Mr. Paul hangs up the material to dry before cutting and fastening it into swatches—ten to fifteen-inch pieces of material in graduated tones of one hue. Finally he cuts the swatch material into one-eighth inch strands with a machine capable of producing five strands at once. Some of the material he “spot-dyes,” dyeing material of one color in spots with another color. This “spot-
Mrs. Robert Sirti iris with this new rug underway matches a swatch of wool strips taken from the table at left to find the right hue to complement completed parts. Flowers are worked first, from the center outward.

dyed" cloth is used for scroll work. Mill-ends of plaid material are often purchased from the factory for use in scrolls, leaves, and sometimes backgrounds.

As Mrs. Paul stresses, the essence of the art of rug-hooking is color harmony. The patterns are not necessarily original, are usually of standard designs. But the colors used to work up the patterns into finished products are entirely up to the artistic discretion of the individual. Although many rug patterns are of symmetrical scheme, asymmetry in color is emphasized to create a subtle interplay of color and design. When planning a rug for a particular setting, Mrs. Paul chooses colors that will harmonize with or complement the tones of the room.

Regarding the nature of color harmony in rug-hooking, Mrs. Paul Towne of Pittsford makes these observations: "Rug-hooking is like painting with a needle. In the olden times, flowers and other patterns were hooked with only one or two solid colors. Now, as Mrs. Paul has taught us, seven or eight colors are used to express nuances of light and shadow."

Mrs. Towne's remarks also recall the deep allegiance that modern rug-hooking enthusiasts owe to their predecessors. As Estelle H. Ries points out in her informative book on American Rugs, rug-hooking is not an American invention; it was one of the arts of ancient Egypt. About 1775 in this country it took precedence over other methods of rug making—braiding and weaving. And since that time it has, perhaps because of its utilitarian character, attracted all types of people.

By the end of the eighteenth century almost every housewife, as well as many sailors at sea, hooked rugs as a purposeful pastime. They made the rugs to be used, but this functional purpose did not detract from the beauty of their productions.

The material in the early rugs differs from that in most modern rugs. Since the burlap, linen, cotton and wool were spun...
or woven at home by the colonists themselves, it was not often possible to produce cloth as fine or as durable as that used today. Colors, too, could not be manufactured chemically, but had to be wrung from Nature. Vegetables, flowers, fruits, leaves, roots and bark were boiled for dyes. Instead of using woolen materials exclusively, a combination of woolen yarn and cotton cloth was used for hooking. Purely decorative rather than realistic considerations usually determined the color patterns.

“One never tires of rug-hooking!” Mrs. Paul’s pupils say. “Like knitting and crocheting it is something you can lay aside or pick up to work on when you feel like it.” Mrs. Paul’s numerous and artistic productions vouch for this. For despite her heavy teaching schedule and caring for her household, which includes two sons, she manages to find time to create works of her own.

Scatter rugs, runner rugs, large living-room rugs and a stair-runner are among the thirty odd she has produced. The stair-runner, one of the charming rugs she has hooked for Mrs. Merle Macomber of Pittsford, took about five months to complete. A large rug takes about seventeen months, while a small one may be finished in three or four months.

Many types of motifs are available—floral, geometric, conventional, scenic and Oriental. The patterns which Mrs. Paul uses are designed by Mrs. Louise H. Zieser, Irving Ave., Providence, R.I. and Virginia Burgeson of So. Berwick, Me. Mrs. Zieser sells her own patterns and those of Miss Burgeson may be obtained from Wilbar Associates in Dover-Foxcroft, Maine. While most people use these ready made patterns for their rug-hooking, some design their own. Mrs. Paul, for instance, at present is at work on a rug designed by its future owner, Mr. Samuel Stowell of Rutland.

Several of the designs created by early rug hookers are sold today. For example, Mrs. Charlotte K. Stratton of Greenfield, Mass., one of New England’s top authorities in rug-hooking, has available Frost Hooked Rug Patterns, the colonial, Turkish and animal patterns first offered by Edward Sands Frost of Maine soon after the close of the Civil War. Today many of the patterns are stamped directly from his original zinc stencils in color, while others are stamped from outline patterns.

Mrs. Henry Phillips of Pittsford, at work on her fourteenth rug, predicts a busy future for herself: “I have nine children and seventeen grandchildren and I’ve promised to make a rug for each one of them!”

“The rugs are grand gifts,” Mrs. William Denison and Mrs. Robert Sird say. Several of their friends have been the lucky recipients of their handicraft. Miss Martha Adams, the only Rutland member of the Pittsford class, displays three handsome large rugs which she has hooked in the past two years.

Women, however, have no priority today on rug-hooking. “It took me three years but I finally completed it,” exclaims the Reverend Paul, as he shows an attractive green and burnt sienna rug with leaf pattern hooked from a paisley shawl.

The tyro interested in rug-hooking as a hobby may receive expert guidance from the recommended Creating Hooked Rugs, by Vera Bisbee Underhill with Arthur J. Burks. This book, available through Mrs. Zieser, demonstrates with sketches and designs how one can master the art of hooking rugs.
Allen Morse of Calais, an unsung Yankee yarner, invented Vermont's most famous, fascinating and controversial tale, about

Human Hibernation

by Roland W. Robbins

While running the risk of spoiling this half-believed tale, the author seems to establish that Vermonters never really gave their old people such "cold treatment".

As I write the sequel to, Was Human Hibernation Practiced in Vermont?, here in Massachusetts it is a hot, humid July day. The red in my shaded thermometer is pushing 98 degrees. Yet the nature of the subject leaves me unaware of the heat of the day.

I would prefer to be enjoying some cool, secluded spot in Vermont while revealing new facts on the human hibernation story. Being an archaeologist, specializing in the American Colonial period, the summer months are most ideal for the excavations that accompany this work. As such, this profession has deprived me of spending as much time in Vermont as I would like.

I must apologize to the many readers of Vermont Life for having not presented this material to them much
A Strange Tale

by A.M.

I am an old man now, and have seen some strange sights in the course of a
roving life in foreign lands as well as in this country, but none so strange as
one I found recorded in an old diary, kept by my Uncle William, that came in
to my possession a few years after his decease. The events described took
place in a mountain town some twenty miles from Montpelier, the Capital of
Vermont. I have been to the place on the mountain, and seen the old log-
house where the events I found recorded in the diary took place, and seen and
talked with an old man who vouched for the truth of the story, and that his
father was one of the parties operated on. The account runs in this wise:

"January 7. — I went on the mountain today, and witnessed what to me was a horrif-
ible sight. It seems that the dwellers there, who are unable, either from age or
other reasons, to contribute to the sup-
port of their families, are disposed of: In
the winter months in a manner that will
shock the one who reads this diary, un-
less that person lives in that vicinity. I
will describe what I saw. Six persons,
four men and two women, one of the
men a cripple about 90 years old, the
other five past the age of usefulness,
lay on the earthy floor of the cabin,
dragged into insensibility, while members
of their families were gathered about
them in apparent indifference. In a short
time the unconscious bodies were sur
rounded by several old people, who said, ‘They are ready.’ They were then stripped
of all their clothing, except a single gar-
mant. Then the bodies were carried out-
side, and laid on logs exposed to the bi-
ter cold mountain air, the operation hav-
ing been delayed several days for suit-
able weather.

‘It was night when the bodies were
conveyed out, and the moon, occasion-
ally obscured by flying clouds, shone on
their upturned ghastly faces, and a hor-
rible fascination kept me by the bodies as
long as I could endure the severe cold.
Soon the noses, ears, fingers began to
turn white, then the limbs and face as-
sumed a tallowy look. I could stand the
cold no longer, and went inside, where I
found the friends in cheerful conver-
sation. ‘

‘In about an hour I went out and looked
at the bodies; they were fast freezing.
Again I went inside, where the men were
smoking their clay pipes, but silence had
fallen on them; perhaps they were thinking
of the time when their turn would come to be cared for in the same way.
One by one they at last lay down on the
floor, and went to sleep. It seemed a horri-
ble nightmare to me, and I could not
think of sleep. I could not shut out
the sight of those freezing bodies out-
side, neither could I bear to be in dark-
ness, but I piled on the wood in the cav-
ernous fireplace, and, seated on a shil-
gle block, passed the dark night, ter-
ror-striken by the horrible sights I had
witnessed.

LEFT: This old clipping started Author Robbins on his quest.
This is the beginning of Allen Morse’s Strange Tale, dreamed up
to entertain family and friends, but now retold around the world.
The Montpelier Argus & Patriot first printed the yarn, when
Morse’s daughter, who worked on the paper, suggested publishing it.

earlier. This information came about following my article, Was Human Hibernation Practiced in Vermont?,
which appeared in the winter edition of 1949-50 of this
publication. I received floods of letters, both instructive
and helpful, as well as a word or two from cranks.

First I want to give you the name of the author of the
original story purporting human hibernation practices in
Vermont many years ago. This story first appeared on
the front page of the Montpelier Argus & Patriot, De-
cember 21, 1887. It had for its title, A Strange Tale. The
author left for posterity, “By A.M.” If he had known
that years later his unusual story was to create such
countroversy, it is likely he would have signed his account,
“By Allen Morse.”

He might have gone a bit further and related the origin
of his yarn. But if he had signed his name, and had re-
corded the source of his tale, it is likely much of the
story’s flavor would have been lost. The intrigue
and mystery surrounding this legend has stimulated the
imagination of many, not the least of which is my own.
I trust that the account which follows will not tend to
have its readers feel towards my work on this subject the
way a close friend felt when I discovered the true site of
Thoreau’s famous cabin at Walden Pond, Concord,
Massachusetts. “You have removed the thrill and stimulus
that used to accompany my walks to Thoreau’s cairn.”

Of the many letters received from Vermont Life
readers, several contained witticisms worthy of note.
For instance, there was the Vermonter who wrote,
“Shucks, we don’t hibernate in the winter—we just
slow down a bit.”

Another reader told how he always respected the
opinion of an operator of one of the stage routes out of
Montpelier. But one day they were discussing an incident
that was a physical impossibility. The closing remark of
this revered person was; “If I hadn’t seen it in the news-
paper, I wouldn’t believe it.”

Several letters claimed that the author of A Strange Tale
was Allen Morse.

On May 15, 1950, I received a letter from Mrs. Mabel
E. Hynes of Agawam, Massachusetts. Mrs. Hynes had
just returned home after spending the winter in Florida.\n
Awaiting her arrival was Vermont Life and the human
hibernation story.

Mrs. Hynes wrote, “I am positive and certain that I
can furnish the origin and history of that yarn spun by
my grandfather.”

Several days later I spent the afternoon with Mrs.
Hynes. The following is her story.

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"Allen Morse was my grandfather. He was born in Woodbury, Vermont, December 21, 1835. He moved to Calais, Vermont before 1840, where he lived for the rest of his life. He died January 29, 1917 and was buried in the Robinson Burial Ground at Calais.

"He was a dairy farmer, and at one time was a notary public. He had four children, three girls and a boy, the eldest being my mother, Alice May. He owned the first Howe Sewing Machine to go into the north, and put it to profitable use by doing stitching, charging 10c per yard. Allen Morse had one of the first foot pump-organs in his community. Because of this, neighbors would gather at his home for 'singing school.' Another form of evening entertainment was 'yarning', or the telling of stories.

"My grandfather wrote farming and political articles and on occasion wrote verse. He contributed stories to New England Homestead magazine. I doubt that he wrote much for periodicals after 1894–1900.

"He was interested in spiritualism and told of his experiences.

"He was always known as a spinner of yarns, and used to tell stories about his imaginary young Indian friends. When I was a small girl he told me about a little Indian girl named Chunk-a-lunk-ma-goosi who would tell him stories. Chunk-a-lunk-ma-goosi told of the small Indian girl who went fishing in Wheeler's Mill Pond at Worcester, Vermont:

"She got thirsty—no water to drink. After awhile she began drinking the pond. Kept drinking and drinking, until she drank it all up. Then she got out of the boat
and walked across the pond and up to her home. And didn't get her feet wet, because the pond was dry.'

"Grandfather would often work the fairies into his stories. I was 10 years old when Grandfather Morse told me his story about freezing Vermonters for the winter. The yarn scared me badly, and I often asked mother about it. I believe grandfather said that the box in which the hibernated people were placed was carried to Eagle Ledge, which is between Calais and East Elmore. I seem to recall a log cabin being associated with that area. I was born in the house at Calais where grandfather wrote this story, but it has since burned. The family always called it 'grandpa's yarn'."

Mrs. Hynes believes A Strange Tale was first told by Allen Morse at a family reunion picnic:

"It was customary for the family and relatives to hold an annual picnic each August, just after haying season. After plenty of good food and merriment the men-folk would go into their story telling.

"William Noyes, who married Allen Morse's sister, Julia, was driving to one of these family picnics, being held at Calais, when he experienced an odd phenomenon while passing a cemetery on Clay Hill, Montpelier. A bright flame was rising from the soils of a recently dug grave. This flame did not burn for long, but its strange sight unnerved William Noyes.

"He related this experience at the picnic later in the day. Other men-folk took the story with a grain of salt, thought William was not only a good story teller, but an excellent actor as well. Several others told yarns that they had prepared for the occasion. Then Grandfather Morse took over and dramatically told his fascinating story of Vermonters hibernating their elderly and sickly members during the winter months, because food was scarce and they couldn't earn their keep. Family tradition believes this to be the first time grandfather told his tale.

"In time this became grandfather's favorite yarn, and he related it many times. Each time it was told something new would be added, or changes made to make it sound more weird and strange.

"By the time grandfather got around to writing out his story and entitling it, A Strange Tale, by A.M., it was years after he had dreamed it up and had related it for the first time. If it hadn't been for my mother, it is likely grandfather would never have recorded the yarn. It came about in an unusual manner.

"Mother went to school in Montpelier. About 1878-79 she went to work for the Argus & Patriot, then a weekly newspaper, where she set type and did proof reading. She left the newspaper in 1883 when she married Isaac Wright. She returned to the Argus & Patriot in 1886 where she worked until March, 1888.

"Late in 1887, realizing her father's birthday came on a day that the Argus and Patriot was to be published, she arranged with its publisher, Hiram Atkins, to print A Strange Tale. Allen Morse wrote the story for the Argus and Patriot, signing his initials to the account. My mother set the type, and A Strange Tale made the front page of this newspaper on Wednesday, December 21, 1887. Grandfather celebrated his fifty-second birthday on this date, and was quite pleased with this birthday remembrance."

I asked Mrs. Hynes if she had any idea as to who "Uncle William," the owner of the old diary mentioned in A Strange Tale, may have been.

"William Noyes was a Civil War veteran and was known to many as 'Uncle William'. It is possible grandfather had him in mind when writing the story."

As recently as July, 1952, Mrs. Hynes showed her concern for having the true facts about A Strange Tale revealed. She does not welcome the unfavorable light this fallacy reflects on her native state and its stalwart people. On July 14th, Mrs. Hynes wrote to me: "I hope you write your account soon, as my face gets redder every time I read it."

The account has been written. Vermont Life readers have heard Mrs. Hynes tell of the origin of A Strange Tale and the identity of its author who signed his story with the initials, A.M. Her story and the human interest it weaves, enhances the tale.

In my book, A Strange Tale remains New England's top yarn. As for Allen Morse, here is an excellent example of a hard working, intelligent, Vermont Yankee, with a keen imagination and the zest to make use of these virtues.

Would that I could claim descendence from Allen Morse, with his inherent imagination and flair for yarn spinning. My remaining days would be lived in Vermont with my family and my typewriter. While my writing would not be on a par with Allen Morse's classic, A Strange Tale, I would sign it, "by Roland Robbins" and not, "by R.R."
by Raymond Sanders

A new sort of Vermont crop yields canine aristocrats well suited to the Green Mountain regions.

When I tell anyone that I have a Husky for a pet they immediately ask me how I dare have such a ferocious dog around. In fact, some believe that they are kept in cages like wild animals. I suppose it is a little disappointing when I explain to them that a Husky is a domesticated dog, friendly, and a house pet. These myths were built up in people’s minds by Jack London and other writers of the far North.

The Husky is gaining recognition as a pet equal to the rank he has always held as a work-dog. Already there are many of them in Vermont homes, and some of our Vermont born dogs have found homes in other New England states.

If you really want to know all about them you should visit Brud’s Husky Farm on Route 5 between Hartland and North Hartland, Vermont. Vernon “Brud” Gardner started in the Husky business with one dog, the gift of the girl who later became Mrs. Gardner. Later, in 1938, he purchased several more dogs and soon had his first team organized. Like the writer, Gardner became interested in Huskies from boyhood reading of Call of the Wild, Silver Chief and other stories of the northern dogs.

If Brud’s Husky Farm were located in any other state there would be a huge sign, probably neon lighted, instead of the modest shingle that hangs near the entrance on Route 5. They might charge admission to see the dogs, probably would sell photographs, and answer questions for a slight fee. But not the Gardners. When a car drives in the dogs announce it, and Marjorie or Brud or both come out and show the visitor around. The dogs love to have visitors as much as the Gardners and sometimes put on little acts to attract attention.

The Gardners have two-dog passenger sleds and a freight sled and a training wagon that they will show you, as well as other equipment. And above all, they will talk to you about Huskies as long as you care to stay. Of course, they sometimes have Husky puppies for sale and you will find it very hard to resist taking one home.

After Brud got his first team organized the Army sent him with the K-9 corps, dog team and all. The Army bought his team from him and he trained other teams and later took supplies to ski troops when mechanical equipment failed to get through.

He replaced his team after his discharge in 1945 and
now is constantly in demand at sportsmans shows and at winter carnivals. His team won the Newport handicap in 1948.

Once I hitched Silver, our 3 year old Siberian Husky, to my three year old daughter’s sled to go down the road to the mailbox. Yelling “Mush” and emitting warwhoops which I hoped the dog would understand, I did more pulling than the dog; I had to pull the sled and Becky and the dog. It wasn’t until I visited the Husky farm that I learned that Mush was only used in the movies and story books. It really means to mush or pack down deep snow with snowshoes to make the going easier.

There are no reins on a dog team so all commands must be oral. Gardner starts his dogs by “All right, go ahead.” He uses “Gee” for the right turn and “Haw” for a left turn and “Whoa” to bring them to a stop. If other commands are needed he talks to them as he would to a person and they understand.

Gardner explains that a race usually covers from 30 to 35 miles and is divided into two days’ travel. The dog harness is very light and they use a racing sled weighing 40 pounds, though the northern work sled runs to 170 pounds. The usual load is 100 pounds per dog, plus three dogs for the sled. Nine dogs would ordinarily pull a 600 pound load.

The breeds of Northern sled dogs recognized by the American Kennel Club are: Malamute, Eskimo, Samoyede, and Siberian. Most of Gardner’s dogs are Malamutes. They give the dogs Eskimo names and when they can’t think of one they get out a map of Alaska and pick out a name. The Gardners are constant readers of Alaskan publications and northern folklore and collectors of pictures and material about Huskies.

Huskies are among the aristocrats when it comes to price. A puppy costs $75 and up and a trained adult may run up to $1000. If you are considering going into the dog-team racing business you had better think twice about it. A trained team and equipment would cost you more than a high priced car—and then you have to feed them all the year round.

Huskies as a rule are very friendly dogs and demand more love and attention, if you make them household pets, than most dogs. Some Huskies do howl but our dog never howls or barks; she makes a sort of talking sound when you are conversing with her and she attempts to reply.

Huskies have been living with humans in the north for centuries. An Arctic community is a small, compact place and people certainly wouldn’t have vicious, untamed dogs around. It is said that the Army couldn’t use Huskies for certain work since they couldn’t be trained to attack humans.

Our Silver is friendly with everyone, but Huskies often are very good watchdogs. Silver goes to school and is a
ABOVE: Gardner’s Vermont-raised and trained team steps out at a winter race. Huskies are his hobby, almost pay their own keep.

LEFT: “Tug,” an Alaskan Malamute, is Gardner’s new lead dog. Some Huskies have pale blue eyes, some yellow, and some one of each.

People often ask if keeping a Husky is expensive, perhaps having in mind tossing them a frozen fish or some whale meat. Gardner feeds his dogs commercial dog food once a day. We treat our dog more as a pet and she gets frozen horse meat once in a while in addition to the regular dog food.

Every winter Gardner thrills many children, and adults too, throughout New England with rides on his dog sled at the various winter resorts. In addition there are numerous races and appearances at sportsman shows, clubs, schools, and an occasional trip to New York for a television program in which they need a dog team to pull a fur clad singer for some wintry song. All of this keeps Brud busy at his hobby. But above all, Gardner will be satisfied if he has done justice to this breed of dog that has been a companion and helpmate to man for centuries.
ARGATUCK. A lead dog is born, not made; must be calm, intelligent, loyal. He doesn’t have to be able to “lick” the other dogs in the team.
At the Sign of the Quill

A Department of Literary Comment

By Arthur Wallace Peach

WINTER VOICES

A smothered tinkle as of muffled bells comes up from the streams through their double roofing of snow and ice, and the frozen pulse of the trees complains of its thralldom with a resonant twang as of a strained cord snapped aunder . . . Amid the desolation of their woodland haunts the squirrels chatter their delight in winless days of sunshine and scoff at biting cold and wintry blasts. The nuthatch winds his tiny trumpet, the titmouse pipes his chery note, the jay tries the innumerable tricks of his unmusical voice, and from their rollicking flight aloudward the warping slant of snowflakes drifts the creaking twitter of buntings . . . Night, stealing upon her in dusky pallor, under cloudy skies, or silvering her face with moonbeams and starlight, brings other and wilder voices. Solemnly, the unearthly trumpet of the owl resounds from his woodland hermitage; the fox's gasping bark, wild and uncanny, marks at intervals his wayward course across the frozen fields on some errand of love or free-booting; and, swelling and falling with puff and lapse of the night wind, as mournful and lonesome as the voice of a vagrant spirit, comes from the mountain ridges the baying of a hound . . .

From In New England Fields and Woods by Rowland E. Robinson (Ferrisburg, Vt., 1833-1900)

This and That and Others

Since I voiced the opinion in a recent Quill that Vermonters have their own brand of humor, I have been doused with stories from other states with the claim that each state has its own characteristic humor. I am inclined to question such a claim, for the simple reason that a sense of humor must have tradition and depth beneath it—that is, it grows out of a life that has not been buried by shifts and changes of ideas and population. However, I may be wrong; but here is an anecdote told to me by a fifth generation Ver­monter; and I doubt if it ever was duplicated in any form in any other state:

"My grandfather operated a country store and sold grain. His bags were marked C.C.P. One day, when I was riding with Grandfather, we rounded a bend, and on the left was an elderly man hoeing his garden. He had patched his pants with a grain bag, and on the seat, stamped clearly, were the initials 'C.C.P.' Grandfather took one look and exclaimed:

'I know own the old cuss, body and soul, but I didn't suppose the damned fool would advertise it!'"

That yarn comes solidly out of the past, and like most true Vermont stories with such a history, it can be used to point up a truth—in this case, the fact that it pays to advertise. In suggesting, a few issues back, that I would offer some favorite Vermont books that made a good Vermont Bookshelf, I did not assume that I was advertising an idea, but the results have startled and somewhat overwhelmed me. Over thirty lists came in from far and near. I propose to sum them up for you and then escape if I can.

The key factor in gathering together such a bookshelf is phrased pleasantly in a pleasant note from K.J.M. writing from Madison, Wisconsin, who says: "It is fun to know what others like in the way of books about a favorite state." It is fun, and reading is fun—and it is a tragic comment on the fact that we have in American the costliest system of edu­cation in America, that a kid is turned out of the mill with a liking for reading, he is pretty near an exception—and don't try to argue with me; I had 5000 American boys in my classes during my teaching career; and with most of them, as they came to us, we had to start all over teaching them merely to read and enjoy reading.

Luckily for some of us, we managed to dodge the "sideshow"s of education which are, as a great college president said years ago, "about ready to swallow the circus"; and very definitely our Vermont Life folks are readers—wise enough to know that every form of pleasure vanishes with the years, but enjoyment of books lasts as long as eyes can read.

Thousands of us, to digress a moment, use hotels, inns, and so forth, but if you must linger, and want to read, you know what you find on the usual table or shelf in such places—mighty poor excuses for reading matter, refuse of one kind or another, most of it publicity stuff the hotel received free. Yet it seems to me common-sense and ordinary horse-sense would suggest that thousands of hotel patrons, for one reason or another, have time on their hands. As for Vermont, it is worth while to remember that Vermont books open vistas of interest in the state, and tend to make visitors linger and come again and (Continued on page 52)
ABOVE: The Davis place in West Dover has changed since Artist Clifford Bayard of Wilmington took this striking photograph. Now owned by Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Jacobs, this is, though 67 years old, the last house erected in West Dover. John Davis built this home in 1885 from lumber worked in his waterwheel mill, which stood across a nearby stream. The house interior has wax-rubbed ash casements. The large maples below the buildings are more than 150 years old. The cat peeking from the snow at the entrance foreground is “Peter.”

NOT FOR SALE

If Vermont could bottle her air and scene,
Put it in tins and sell it and send it around,
So anyone could buy “The Look of a Hill,”
Or simply “Silence,” that odd green,
Or “The Wind Called Sherkshire”—others, then,
Could feast upon Vermont, and keep
Banquets on their shelves,
She won’t. Her men
Are canny enough at marketing

Syrup and tombstones. But the look
Of heavy mountains when they sleep
Through orange sunrise, farms
At clean, hot noon, and highways arched with trees
And piney woodlots—none of these
Are export goods. And yet, it
Seems she gives and gives.
Her strange peace she gives unstintingly,
But you must come and get it.

Bianca Bradbury in THE NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE [Reprinted by permission]
often lead to a lifelong allegiance—besides inducing a feeling of goodwill in that the brains back of a hotel planned for the entertainment and pleasure of a patron.

The point of the preceding paragraph comes to a head in this. I found in The Lodge at Smuggler’s Notch an earnest and sincere effort to assemble an honest-to-goodness Bookshelf for their visitors—not an excuse for one, but a real one; and Charles E. Crane of Let Me Show You Vermont fame and I have tried to help them with suggestions. The idea of such a shelf is worth borrowing all over Vermont—even if first credit must go to the Lodge. I believe that the idea of winter vacations is catching on more and more over the country, and here in Vermont, on extreme winter days, a good book by a hotel fireplace is a thing of joy.

Now for the final list—for I cannot, in a quarterly magazine, keep this scheme going forever, much as I should like to. I have taken the thirty lists, counted the books often mentioned, and compiled what is, I think, a fine working array. I was so impressed by the intelligence shown in the various lists that I refuse, as I first suggested I would do, to publish the books on my own Vermont Bookshelf. The final list is far better than mine.

“Remember,” one of our American poets tells us, “that each of us will go up Calvary, alone, with his cross” in the end; and many of the journeys in books and in life must be made alone, for each of us searches for Something; so no list of the “best” of this and that is ever fully satisfactory; yet there is a Brotherhood of Book Lovers, and in sharing, as K.J.M. suggested I would do, to publish the books on my own Vermont Bookshelf. The final list is far better than mine.

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Short Stories and Sketches. Four Ducks on a Pond—Alice B. Nelson (Vermont Book Shop, Middlebury, Vt.).


ABOVE: Ascendancy Mt. brook in Winter.
A WINTER WONDERLAND

For a fun-packed winter vacation come to the snow corner of New England . . . to Vermont. In all ski areas modernizing and expansion of facilities, winter comforts and guest accommodations are accelerated for the coming season. Dependable snow, finest ski schools, equipment shops and up-hill transportation await you. And . . . Vermont is so accessible, has well-kept winter roads. Send now for Winter folder.

Vermont Development Commission
State House, Montpelier, Vt.

Vermont
SNOW CORNER OF NEW ENGLAND
In Vermont, perhaps even more than elsewhere, there was embodied in the spirit of the people the conviction that governments were like the houses we live in, made to contribute to human welfare, and those who lived in them were as free to change the one as the other.

_Howard N. Creekmore in_ The James Marsh Lecture, 1929